

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A load carrier for mounting to a rear of a vehicle comprising:
- a load carrying platform section;
- a hitch support member defining a transverse axis for mounting to the rear of
- the vehicle, said hitch support member supporting said load-carrying platform;
- a vertical support member defining a vertical axis and connected to said hitch
- 10 support member;
- a horizontal cross-bar member defining a horizontal axis and connected to
- said vertical support member; and
- a plurality of transverse bars connected to said horizontal crossbar member in
- the transverse axis direction, the load-carrying platform for supporting a load, and the
- 15 plurality of transverse bars for securing the load.
2. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, the plurality of transverse bars
- comprising:

a fixed transverse bar attached to the horizontal bar at an end thereof; and
an adjustable transverse bar slidingly disposed on the horizontal crossbar for
securing the load.

5 3. The load carrier as recited in claim 2, the adjustable transverse bar
comprising a clamp assembly on an end thereof, the clamp assembly for slidingly securing
the adjustable transverse bar to the horizontal cross bar.

10 4. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, wherein said load carrying platform has
raised sides for aiding in securing the load to the load-carrying platform.

5 5. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, wherein the hitch support member
comprises a vertical extension for receiving said vertical support member.

15 6. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, wherein the vertical support member
comprises a through-hole support for receiving and supporting the horizontal cross-bar
member.

20 7. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, wherein the horizontal cross-bar is a
first horizontal cross-bar, and further comprising a second horizontal cross-bar connected
to the vertical support member and disposed above the first horizontal cross-bar.

8. The load carrier as recited in claim 7, wherein the plurality of transverse bars are a first set of transverse bars and further comprising a second set of transverse bars connected to the second horizontal cross-bar.

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9. The load carrier as recited in claim 8, wherein the second horizontal crossbar comprises mating holes for adjustably securing the second set of transverse bars.

10. The load carrier as recited in claim 7, wherein the second horizontal cross-bar
10 has a vertical section for connecting to the vertical support member, the vertical section having mating holes for adjusting a height of the second horizontal cross bar and adjustably securing to the vertical support member.

11. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, further comprising a plurality of wheels
15 connected the load carrying platform section for transporting and stowing the load carrier when the load carrier is not connected to a vehicle.

12. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, wherein said plurality of transverse
support bars are further connected by a horizontal connecting member, said horizontal
20 connecting member opposing said horizontal cross-bar member.

13. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, the load carrying platform section comprising a steel grating material.

14. The load carrier as recited in claim 1, the plurality of transverse bars
5 comprising rubber-padding material to protect surfaces of the load.

15. A method for securing a load to a rear of a vehicle comprising:
providing a load-carrying platform;
supporting the load-carrying platform using a hitch support member defining a
10 transverse axis;
attaching a vertical support member to the hitch support member; and
securing the load using a plurality of transverse bars, the plurality of
transverse bars extending in the transverse axis direction from the vertical support
member.

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16. The method for securing a load to a rear of a vehicle of claim 15, further comprising securing the plurality of transverse bars to the vertical support member using a horizontal cross bar member.

20 17. The method for securing a load to a rear of a vehicle of claim 16, further comprising slidably adjusting at least one of the transverse bars to the horizontal cross bar

member on an end thereof.

18. The method for securing a load to a rear of a vehicle of claim 16, further comprising adjusting the height of the horizontal cross bar member to accommodate
5 varying sizes of the load.

19. A load carrier for mounting to a rear of a vehicle comprising:
a load carrying platform section;
a hitch support member supporting the load carrying platform section defining
10 a transverse axis;
a vertical support member connected to the hitch support member;
a means for adjusting a height of the vertical support member; and
a means for securing the load to the vertical support member.

15 20. The load carrier for mounting to a rear of a vehicle of claim 19, wherein the means for securing the load to the vertical support member comprises a means for securing the load to the vertical support member, the load being in an upright position.

21. The load carrier for mounting to a rear of a vehicle of claim 19, the means for
20 securing the load to the vertical support member comprising:
a horizontal cross-bar member defining a horizontal axis and connected to the

vertical support member; and

a plurality of transverse bars connected to said horizontal crossbar member in the transverse axis direction, the load-carrying platform for supporting a load, and the plurality of transverse bars for securing the load.

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22. The load carrier as recited in claim 2, the adjustable transverse bar comprising a clamp assembly on an end thereof, the clamp assembly for slidingly securing the adjustable transverse bar to the horizontal cross bar.

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24. The load carrier as recited in claim 21, wherein the horizontal cross-bar is a first horizontal cross-bar, and further comprising a second horizontal cross-bar connected to the vertical support member and disposed above the first horizontal cross-bar.

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25. The load carrier as recited in claim 21, wherein said plurality of transverse support bars are further connected by a horizontal connecting member, said horizontal connecting member opposing said horizontal cross-bar member.

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26. The load carrier as recited in claim 19, the load carrying platform section comprising;
a steel grating material; and
raised sides.